

ATLANTA MAYOR'S OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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YEAR
IN
REVIEW



LETTER FROM MAYOR KASIM REED

Atlanta's international profile continues to rise. This year, Atlanta was ranked sixth in the world by A.T. Kearney's Global Cities Outlook for its opportunity to be one of the most competitive, influential cities in the world. Additionally, the Brookings Institution named Atlanta as one of 19 "knowledge capitals" in the world, attributing to our talented workforce, research institutions, and role as a growing innovation center. Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport continues to strengthen its position as the world's busiest and most efficient passenger airport for the 18th consecutive year by welcoming a record-breaking 105 million passengers in 2015 alone.

In 2015, Atlanta welcomed more than 50 million visitors who contributed approximately \$15 billion to our economy. My Office of International Affairs, in partnership with the Atlanta Conventions and Visitors Bureau, has worked to increase this impact and attract large-scale international events to the City of Atlanta. To date, these efforts have attracted eight events that will draw more than 50,000 visitors to Atlanta, including the 2016 Clinton Global Initiative, 2017 Rotary International Convention, and the 2017 U.S.-China Tourism Leadership Summit.

Atlanta continues to be a leader as one of the most attractive U.S. destinations for foreign direct investment. In the last twelve months, Germany-based Bauerfeind, U.K.-based Sage Group PLC, and Brazil-based Merchant e-Solutions relocated their North American Headquarters into the heart of our city, bringing more than \$13 million of international investment and creating more than 600 jobs in Atlanta. In effort to further our foreign investment strategy, I joined local leaders for the launch of the Metro Atlanta Foreign Direct Investment Plan as part the second phase of the Brookings Institution's Global Cities Initiative here in Atlanta. Through this strategic effort, we are better equipped to attract international investment to Atlanta, which will continue to strengthen our economy and create stable, high-paying jobs for our talented workforce.

Atlanta's exports have also increased by \$1.3 billion since the launch of the Atlanta Metro Export Plan (Atlanta MEP) in 2013. Last year, the Atlanta MEP Steering Committee launched the Metro Atlanta Export Challenge, which provided \$290,000 worth of grants to 37 Atlanta-based companies to support or initiate their export activities. We will continue to expand our export activities and will launch the second edition of the Export Challenge in early 2017.

We have also continued to expand Atlanta's international network. Our Consular Corps expanded with the addition of the Welsh Government Office in February 2016. Also, within the last year, I and my Chief of Staff Candace Byrd have led missions to seven countries including Cuba, Japan, France, the United Kingdom, South Africa, and Singapore. The relationships forged during these missions will yield results for years to come, stimulate our economy, provide a platform to exchange best practices, and promote culture understanding within our community.

My administration will continue to meet with leaders beyond our borders to enhance innovation, pursue international business opportunities, and ensure Atlanta is at the forefront of the environmental challenges we are faced with today. Through these efforts and with our global connectivity, as well as a young, talented, and culturally-conscious workforce which strengthens our thriving business community, I know that Atlanta will continue to elevate its international presence to become a global powerhouse.

Thank you for all that you do, every day, to make Atlanta the thriving global city it is today.



KASIM REED
Mayor of Atlanta



THE GLOBAL CITIES INITIATIVE

The Mayor's Office of International Affairs, in addition to local key partners including the Metro Atlanta Chamber and Invest Atlanta, continued their efforts in promoting export opportunities and attracting foreign direct investment through its partnership with the Brookings Institution. Since launching the partnership in 2013, the Global Cities Initiative has led to the release of the Atlanta Metro Export Plan (Atlanta MEP) and the Metro Atlanta Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Plan, both outlining key strategies for stimulating Metro Atlanta's economy and creating quality jobs for Atlantans.

On October 30 2015, with the support of JP Morgan Chase, the Atlanta MEP Steering Committee launched the Metro Atlanta Export Challenge, a grant program targeting small and medium-sized businesses looking to begin exporting or increase their current export programs. Applications were submitted by more than 60 companies ranging in size from pre-revenue startups to small and established medium-sized businesses. Thirty-seven companies were selected as semi-finalists and each received a reimbursement grant of \$5,000 to apply towards expenses related to building export capacity and activities during the first quarter of 2016.

During the second phase of the Challenge, semi-finalists who demonstrated export success as a result of the grant were invited to the Atlanta Metro Export Challenge Pitch Day on August 5, 2016. The top three winners from the Pitch Day received additional grants of \$20,000, \$10,000 and \$5,000 to use towards export growth. Atlanta-based DDM Systems and United Science were selected among the top five, with United Sciences taking 3rd place and receiving an additional \$5,000 grant.

As a complement to the Atlanta MEP, Mayor Reed joined local leaders to announce the release of the Metro Atlanta

FDI Plan on May 3, 2016. The launch included a published report that outlines five strategies to better leverage foreign direct investment in the metro Atlanta region.

The report details how foreign owned enterprises provide higher wages and stronger benefits packages than domestic companies, contribute more to local research and development efforts, and increase productivity of domestic markets through the infusion of new technologies and practices.

Through the detailed strategies and tactics outlined in the Metro Atlanta FDI Plan, the City of Atlanta is better equipped to attract foreign direct investment which will stimulate the local economy and provide quality jobs for Atlantans.

In the last 12 months, the City of Atlanta has welcomed three international companies which brought more than \$13 million of investment to Atlanta and created more than 600 quality jobs.

To learn more about the Atlanta Metro Export Plan, visit www.AtlantaExportPortal.com or the Metro Atlanta Foreign Direct Investment Plan, visit www.AtlantaFDIPortal.com.

THE COP 21 UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

On December 4, 2015, Mayor Reed joined leaders from across the globe in Paris, France for a series of speaking engagements and to participate in the Climate Summit for Local Leaders organized by Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo and former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg. The event took place alongside the United Nations twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 21), a series of negotiations among world leaders to make an agreement to address global climate change, known as COP 21.

Mayor Reed joined city leaders from across the globe, including Sydney Mayor Clover Moore and Cape Town City Councilor Johannes Van Der Merwe, to discuss strategies for reducing energy consumption and the carbon footprint of commercial buildings during the "Buildings Day" panel discussion. On this occasion, Mayor Reed discussed Atlanta's national leadership in the Better Buildings Challenge, a public-private partnership to reduce energy and water consumption by 20 percent by the year 2020, and Atlanta's commitment to improve energy efficiency in more than 100 million square feet of commercial building space as part of the challenge.

Mayor Reed also joined the "Cities and Regions, Leading from the Front with Equity and Inclusion" panel, which included other municipal executives to discuss leadership on climate at the local level.

Finally, Mayor Reed joined more than 500 Mayors and municipal representatives from 115 countries at Paris City Hall to make the case for how cities can and will lead on implementing local climate change solutions.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change concluded on December 12, 2015, resulting in a historic agreement between 175 countries outlining

efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and manage the impacts of climate change.

Under Mayor Reed's leadership and through the efforts of the Office of Sustainability, the City of Atlanta is innovating and implementing solutions for climate change and sustainability to ensure Atlanta remains globally competitive. In May 2016, the City of Atlanta was selected to join the Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities network. This achievement will allow the City of Atlanta to leverage tools to achieve the goals set by the Paris Agreement during the COP 21 Convention and connect Atlanta to a network of cities leading on issues of resiliency and sustainability.



"Ensuring that local companies and entrepreneurs have greater access to overseas markets will strengthen our local economy by adding jobs and facilitating more innovation."

KASIM REED
Mayor of Atlanta



ATLANTA FINTECH MISSION TO LONDON

Chief of Staff Candace Byrd led a delegation of eight Atlanta-based financial technology (FinTech) companies to London on February 7, 2016 to identify export opportunities with the world's largest FinTech economy and to promote foreign direct investment in the metro Atlanta region. The trade mission was co-organized by the Mayor's Office of International Affairs and Invest Atlanta, with the support of the Metro Atlanta Chamber, the Georgia Department of Economic Development and the United Kingdom Trade & Investment office in Atlanta.

"Global investments in the financial technology sector have tripled from \$4.05 billion in 2013 to \$12.21 billion in 2014 in the United States," said Mayor Reed. "And with a combined financial technology market worth more than \$60 billion, the City of Atlanta and the United Kingdom have tremendous potential for increased trade and investment in this arena—enhancing our economy and bringing jobs to Atlanta."

The Atlanta-based FinTech startups participated in the trade mission including AuthenticID, eDea, FactPipe, NCR Small Business, QASymphony, TGR Partners, and TradeRocket. Senior executives from InComm and Worldpay US also participated.

The trade mission began with a SwitchPitch session at Barclay's Rise London, a premier international FinTech accelerator. The session provided a unique platform for established London-based FinTech firms, including Barclays and Euroclear, to present potential partnership and investment opportunities to the Atlanta-based companies.

The Atlanta-based executives also presented their technologies during a ChooseATL pitch session to investors and industry executives at the offices of London & Partners.

Throughout the course of the week, delegates met with industry professionals and legal advisors to learn about the regulatory environment and best practices in expanding into the United Kingdom within the FinTech industry.

While in London, the delegation also attended Finovate Europe 2016, a premier financial technology trade show featuring cutting-edge banking and financial technologies from across the globe.

Since the mission, the Atlanta-based startups have continued building on relationships formed and have experienced an increase in inquiries regarding their firms and services from London and across the European Union. In partnership with the British Consulate General and the United Kingdom Trade & Investment offices in Atlanta, the Mayor's Office of International Affairs and the Atlanta-based startups will continue to pursue a number of leads that could generate additional contracts and increase exports of Atlanta-based FinTech services and technologies.

ATLANTA TO AFRICA

Since taking office, Mayor Kasim Reed has continued Ambassador Andrew Young's efforts in strengthening Atlanta's relationship with the African continent. In the last three years, Atlanta has welcomed numerous African delegations and hosted 125 delegates as part of President Obama's Young African Leaders Initiative. To further these efforts, Mayor Reed joined Ambassador Young in South Africa from March 27 to April 1, 2016 to explore Atlanta's rooted connections in South Africa and promote business and trade between Atlanta and the country's largest city, Johannesburg.

"Many in Africa know Atlanta as the center of African-American culture and the cradle of the Civil Rights movement. Dr. King's legacy was hugely relevant as Nelson Mandela and others fought against apartheid in South Africa," stated Mayor Reed. "I know that we have to engage with Africa or we are giving up part of our own legacy, which is why it was important to me to join Ambassador Young on this experience."

Mayor Reed was joined by City Councilmember Kwanza Hall and a number of Atlanta based businesses, including Carter & Associates, LLC and Dentons US LLP, during the visit to Johannesburg and the Gauteng Province. Bilateral meetings were held between Johannesburg Mayor Parks Tau and Gauteng Premier David Makhura to discuss best practices in transportation, infrastructure and innovation, and to identify trade and investment opportunities.

The Atlanta delegation met with representatives of the U.S. Commercial Services and U.S. Ambassador Patrick Gaspard to discuss trade and investment opportunities with the Republic of South Africa. Mayor Reed also led a presentation focused on promoting Atlanta as a world-class city to do business during a luncheon organized by the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce.

To conclude the visit, the delegation visited Coca-Cola's 5x20 women's empowerment project and the Gauteng Innovation Hub to discuss further cooperation in innovation and entrepreneurship.

In June 2016, for the second year in row, the City of Atlanta, Clark Atlanta University, and Georgia State University welcomed 50 of Africa's brightest emerging business leaders and entrepreneurs as part of the U.S. Department of State's Young African Leaders Initiative's Mandela Washington Fellowship. During their time in Atlanta, the Fellows focused their programming on business and entrepreneurship as well as public management. Mayor Reed welcomed the Fellows to Atlanta City Hall and led a discussion on best practices in municipal administration, urban development, business, and the important role globalization plays in today's society. The group also had the opportunity to network with senior members of Mayor Reed's administration during an evening reception.



2016 WORLD CITIES SUMMIT

In February 2016, President Obama launched the U.S.-ASEAN Connect initiative aimed to provide strategic focus to ongoing and future U.S. economic activities throughout the region. In effort to be at the forefront of this initiative, Chief of Staff Candace Byrd led a delegation of senior city officials to Singapore for the 2016 World Cities Summit and the Singapore International Water Week from July 8-14, 2016. Additionally, the Atlanta delegation met with government leaders and business executives to evaluate the business environment of the country and to promote trade and investment with the metro Atlanta region.

Since 2003, Singapore has been ranked #1 in the world for ease of doing business by the World Bank. Additionally, due to the country's favorable tax codes, low corruption, infrastructure, and an English speaking population; Singapore serves as a key gateway into Southeast Asia and other neighboring countries. In order to better equip Atlanta-based companies to expand in the region, the Atlanta delegation met with representatives from the U.S. Commercial Services to gain a better sense of the business environment and identify export opportunities. Ms. Byrd and Deputy Director of International Affairs Bettina Gardner also met with a number of business executives looking to establish a presence in Atlanta.

The Atlanta delegation joined U.S. Ambassador to Singapore Kirk Wagar and other high level officials for the opening of the U.S. Pavilion as part of the Singapore International Water Week—a biennial trade show attracting more than 21,000 industry professionals and business executives which resulted in more than \$10 billion of new business across the globe.

As part of the World Cities Summit, the Atlanta delegation joined city leaders from more than 110 cities from across

the globe for the 2016 Mayors Forum. The peer-to-peer platform provided the opportunity for delegates to discuss innovative solutions in water and waste management in addition to best practices in attracting foreign direct investment, urban planning, smart cities, and governance. The Forum resulted in a list of recommendations for cities to ensure equity, sustainability, and quality of life which will be adopted during the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito, Ecuador from October 17-20, 2016. Additional events were held across the week, providing a platform for senior city officials to exchange best practices in service delivery, transportation, trade and investment, and innovation.

Through connections made at World Cities Summit, Atlanta was recognized as a global FinTech hub and chosen as a target recruitment city for the inaugural Singapore FinTech Festival to be held in November 2016. The mission also provided the Atlanta delegation an opportunity to discuss future cooperation with Singapore as part of the Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities network.



ATLANTA'S GATEWAY TO THE WORLD

Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (HJIA) serves as an essential tool in expanding our global presence. HJIA provides nonstop service to more than 150 domestic destinations and 60 international destinations. Through increased international access, the City of Atlanta is better positioned to attract foreign investment and increase exports.

In May 2016, the Mayor's Office of International Affairs, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, and the Atlanta Convention & Visitor Bureau traveled to New Delhi, India on a fact-finding mission aimed to attract a direct flight between Atlanta and the world's second most populated city. The delegation met with local and national officials as well as executives of India's flagship carrier, Air India, to learn more about the carrier's strategic goals and discuss the potential benefits to establishing non-stop service to Atlanta.

Also in May, Mayor Kasim Reed welcomed Turkish Airlines' inaugural flight between Atlanta and Istanbul; Turkish Ambassador Serdar Kilic and Coca-Cola CEO Muhtar Kent also attended. The new route comes after Chief of Staff Candace Byrd traveled to Istanbul in 2014 to meet with Turkish Airlines' executive team.

On May 24, 2016, Chief of Staff Candace Byrd and Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport General Manager Roosevelt Council joined Tel Aviv's Ben-Gurion International Airport's Managing Director Shmuel Zakay and Israeli Consul General Ambassador Judith Varnai Shorer for the signing of a sister airport agreement between the two respective airports. The dynamic partnership will focus the sharing of best practices on airport management and security, in addition to promoting economic development between the two regions.

To cap off our aviation efforts, Mayor Reed welcomed Qatar Airways' inaugural flight to Atlanta from Doha, which landed at Hartsfield-Jackson on June 1st.

Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport continues to be the largest economic engine for the U.S. Southeast. Global connectivity through international flight routes serve as a tool to increase international business and create opportunity and growth for the City of Atlanta and the region.

In 2015, the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport became the first airport to serve more than 100 million passengers in one calendar year—holding its title as the world's busiest passenger airport for the past 18 years.

ATTRACTING GLOBAL EVENTS

In 2015, the City of Atlanta was ranked the fourth most visited city in the United States with more than 50 million visitors who contributed approximately \$15 billion to the local economy. This success is largely contributed to Atlanta's rise as a top destination for meetings and events due to its global connectivity, thriving hospitality industry, world-class event space and affordability. To elevate these efforts, the Mayor's Office of International Affairs, in partnership with the Atlanta Conventions and Visitors Bureau, works to attract large-scale international events to the City of Atlanta. To date, these efforts have attracted eight events that will draw more than 50,000 visitors to Atlanta.

Clinton Global Initiative America Meeting

On June 13, 2016 Mayor Kasim Reed welcomed President Bill Clinton and more than 1,000 leaders to Atlanta for the 2016 Clinton Global Initiative America Meeting. The meeting provided a platform to develop tangible commitments to spur economic growth, competitiveness, and increase social mobility. Four commitments were made for the City of Atlanta, including a \$2.5 million grant to fund redevelopment projects in Atlanta's Westside neighborhoods.

2015 Fulbright Association Annual Conference

On November 12, 2015, Mayor Kasim Reed joined Ambassador Andrew Young in welcoming more than 200 Fulbright Alumni to Atlanta for the 2015 Fulbright Association Annual Conference. Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi and global leaders led conversations in addressing global health and education concerns. It was the first time the prestigious organization held its U.S. annual meeting outside of Washington, D.C.

Protocol Diplomacy International Education Forum

On August 1, 2016, the City of Atlanta welcomed more than 150 protocol professionals for Protocol Diplomacy International's 15th Annual International Protocol Education Forum.

Sustainable Airport Area International Seminar

As part of our partnership with Hubstart Paris, the sixth Sustainable Airport Area International Seminar will return to Atlanta on September 21, 2016. More than 150 industry leaders will focus on the efforts of airports all over the world aimed at expanding economic opportunities and developing workforces.

Japan-America Grassroots Summit

More than 200 Japanese delegates will visit Atlanta from October 4 – 11, 2016 for the 26th Japan-America Grassroots Summit—an annual exchange focused on promoting cultural understand and peace.

In 2017, Atlanta will serve as host city to numerous world-class events, including the 2017 Rotary International Convention from June 10-14, 2017. This Convention is expected to be one of the largest Rotary Conventions in history with pre-registration numbers exceeding 21,000 as of July 2016. Atlanta will also host the 2017 U.S.-China Tourism Leadership Summit and the 2017 Sage Summit in the financial technology sector.

DIPLOMACY IN THE SOUTH

According to A.T. Kearney's 2016 Global Cities Index, Atlanta is the 40th most global city in the world and ranked sixth by the study's Global Cities Outlook. To ensure Atlanta remains globally competitive, the Mayor's Office of International Affairs develops and maintains relationships with Atlanta's international organizations and works to provide a world-class experience to international visitors.

The Mayor's Office of International Affairs strives to provide the best level of support to the more than 70 consular and trade offices and the nearly 40 bi-national chambers. Our efforts help to ensure that expatriates are acclimated, informed of city initiatives and connected with community leaders.

On May 25, 2016, the Mayor's Office of International Affairs hosted its second "Experience Atlanta Consular Corps Tour" in partnership with Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. Nearly 80 diplomats, city officials, business and community leaders took part in the day's activities, which included site visits and presentations by the Atlanta Center for International Arbitration and Mediation, Invest Atlanta, the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, the Mayor's Office of Sustainability, Twelve Studios, and the Women's Entrepreneurship Initiative. A highlight of the day's event was the luncheon on the rooftop of Ponce City Market where Mayor Kasim Reed provided the keynote address followed by remarks by Jamestown CEO Matt Bronfman and Aviation General Manager Roosevelt Council.

Over the last 12 months, the Mayor's Office of International Affairs also welcomed more than 80 international delegations from over 60 countries and territories. Business, academic, and political leaders traveled to Atlanta to foster economic ties, share best practices, develop student exchange opportunities.

On October, 6, 2015 Mayor Reed welcomed Prime Minister Mark Rutte of the Netherlands, Minister-President Geert Bourgeois of Flanders and more than 85 Dutch-Flemish companies as part of a joint economic mission to Atlanta. The economic mission focused on major Netherlands-Flanders-Atlanta industries such as cyber security, financial technology, and smart logistics. The visit highlighted the growing cooperation between Atlanta and the two regions and culminated with a signing ceremony to solidify new economic partnerships.

As a global community, various City of Atlanta departments interact with a large number of cultures and languages on a daily basis. To ensure that city employees are well equipped to make these visitors feel welcome and provide proper assistance, the Mayor's Office of International Affairs launched its first protocol guide and training services. The detailed guide outlines best practices for international protocol customs and the services provided by the Office of International Affairs and Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

It is through these and other efforts that the City of Atlanta strives to be a welcoming city and a leading purveyor of diplomacy throughout the United States.



ATLANTA'S SISTER CITIES RELATIONS

2015 marked two important anniversaries with Atlanta's sister cities Toulouse, France and Fukuoka, Japan, and brought new leadership to the Atlanta Sister Cities Commission.

Teri Simmons of Arnall Golden Gregory was elected to the Sister Cities International Board of Directors after serving as Chair of the Atlanta Sister Cities Commission for more than ten years. Mayor Kasim Reed appointed Shelby Grubbs of the Atlanta Center for International Arbitration and Mediation as Chair. Mayor Reed also appointed Ember Bishop of the Georgia Department of Economic Development and Farah Amir of the Georgia Council for International Visitors to the Commission.

In October 2015, the Mayor's Office of International Affairs welcomed Toulouse Councilmembers Nicole Miquel-Belaud and Aviv Zonabend to commemorate Atlanta's 40th sister city anniversary with Toulouse, France and to identify further cooperation. As a result, the Mayor's Office of International Affairs, in partnership with Invest Atlanta, opened applications for the first Atlanta-Toulouse Startup Exchange. The reciprocal exchange will provide startups the opportunity to expand their business globally during a two week residency in October 2016.

The following month, Mayor Kasim Reed welcomed Fukuoka Mayor Soichiro Takashima and more than 100 delegates to Atlanta to commemorate the 10th sister city anniversary. The delegation visit followed a business mission to Fukuoka led by Chief of Staff Candace Byrd and International Affairs Director Claire Angelle in July 2015. Japan Consul General Kazuo Sunaga and representatives from the Metro Atlanta Chamber, the Georgia Department of Economic Development, the Japan

External Trade Organization, and the Fukuoka Chamber of Commerce delivered remarks during a business seminar to promote trade between Atlanta and Fukuoka followed by a reception at The Coca-Cola Company.

Significant efforts were made to strengthen the relationship between Atlanta and Rio de Janeiro. In May, Commission Chair Shelby Grubbs met with the Rio de Janeiro Mayor's Office to discuss future cooperation in business, law and film as a follow up to a visit by International Affairs Deputy Director Bettina Gardner in December 2015. Also, Atlanta City Hall and Centennial Olympic Park were illuminated in the colors of the Brazilian flag marking the 100 days until the beginning of the 2016 Summer Olympic Games and throughout the Opening Ceremony. Fernanda Lunchine of the Atlanta World Affairs Council was elected Chair of the Atlanta-Rio de Janeiro Sister Cities Committee and will lead efforts with Atlanta's Brazilian sister city.

Randi Mason of Invest Atlanta and Susannah Lee of Midtown Alliance were also elected as co-Chairs of the Atlanta-Salzburg Sister Cities Committee.

International Affairs Coordinator Taylor Woodruff represented the City of Atlanta and led a best practice workshop at the Sister Cities International 60th Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. During the conference, the findings of a recent economic impact survey were presented, which concluded that Atlanta's sister cities activities generate more than \$84 million for the local economy.



SUCCESS STORIES

Foreign Direct Investment & Trade

In the last twelve months, the Mayor's Office of International Affairs has contributed to more than \$13 million of international investment in Atlanta, creating more than 600 quality jobs. In July 2015, the German orthopedic technology firm, Bauerfeind, relocated its North American Headquarters to the Promenade Tower in Midtown Atlanta. Additionally, the U.K.-based accounting software giant, Sage Group PLC, also relocated its North American headquarters into a newly renovated 78,000 square foot office space in Atlantic Station. As a direct result of Mayor Kasim Reed's 2014 Brazil trade mission, Merchant e-Solutions, a division of Sao Paulo-based Cielo S.A., relocated its global headquarters to Buckhead.

New Diplomatic Presence

In effort to increase cooperation with Atlanta, the Welsh Government established the Welsh Government Office in Atlanta in February 2016. Under the direction of Erica Stevens, the office will focus efforts on trade and investment between the two regions, and serve as a platform for the sharing of best practices and academic programming. The United States is both the largest investor and export destination for Wales, and has four additional locations across the country.

Atlanta Center for International Arbitration and Mediation

In October 2015, the City of Atlanta joined an exclusive list of global arbitration cities, with the opening of the Atlanta Center for International Arbitration and Mediation housed in the new Georgia State University College of Law building. Under the direction of Shelby Grubbs, the Center focuses on the resolution of international business disputes in effort to elevate Atlanta as a world-class city to conduct global business.



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